

amendment. Okay. Senator Warner, would you care to close on the committee amendment, please.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, the committee amendment is less restrictive than the way the bill was introduced. I want to go back and repeat the...what is back of this bill a little bit, for as much as I have time for. The purpose of 1250 is to avoid a problem, not to create one. In my opinion, if we fail to address the issue of how the structure for bargaining is to occur for state employees, if we fail to enact, and we have failed for three years to consider the issue, the Supreme Court has very clearly stated that they do have the right, and I agree they should have the right. But in that process one of the reasons it was not previously addressed is because everybody assumed the state employees were not covered, even though they have been clearly covered as far as the university is concerned, for a longer period of time. Now it is obvious all of them are. To give you some background, it is not a new issue. Last year the Appropriations and the Business and Labor Committee put in a resolution to study the issue, to try to come up with legislation this session. During the course of the summer the Governor appointed a task force composed of some legislators, composed of representatives of bargaining units, state agencies, and they were to come up with a proposal for structure. The study committee by the Legislature, because the Governor had a task force, we assumed that they would come forward with something, and that it would be presented to the study committee. Well, nothing occurred. That task force essentially fell apart. Although the Governor did introduce, you will recall, legislation that just flat out prohibited state employees to be able to negotiate for economic benefits, let alone they would not obviously be able to go to the Commission of Industrial Relations either. But they couldn't even have negotiated under that bill. The Business and Labor Committee indefinitely postponed that bill. So nothing has happened. The Appropriations bill, 1251, when we get to that, has an authorization for up to \$30,000 for the Department of Personnel to seek out a consultant who would come in and assist in drafting neutral legislation that would be equitable both to the employees, as well as to the state, in how the structure ought to be or could be so that equitable bargaining could be done and use of the CIR could be retained. The purpose of this bill is to provide the time for that consultant to do their work. There are some